

AMENDMENTS IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A substrate holding structure comprising a support column provided at a top end portion thereof with a flanged part, and a substrate holding table joined to the flanged part, wherein:

the substrate holding table includes a heating mechanism;

the substrate holding table is provided in a lower surface thereof with a U-shaped groove extending along an outer circumferential surface of the flanged part; and

an inner circumferential surface of the U-shaped groove is connected to the outer circumferential surface of the flanged parts to form a continuous single plane;

wherein a second groove is formed in a part of a portion, opposing the flanged part, of the lower surface of the substrate holding table, whereby the flanged part is joined to the lower surface of the substrate holding table at an outermost annular area of an upper surface of the flanged part, while a remaining area of the upper surface of the flanged part located radially inside the outermost annular area is separated from the substrate holding part by a space provided by the second groove opposing the flanged part, and

wherein the outer surface of the support column having a curvilinear outer surface at a transition part from the support column to the flanged part.

Claim 2 (Original): The substrate holding structure according to claim 1, wherein in sectional view, both an end portion of a profile line of the inner circumferential surface of the U-shaped groove on a side of the flanged part and a profile line of the outer circumferential surface of the flanged part are situated on a single line segment extending in a vertical direction.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The substrate holding structure according to claim 2, wherein: the substrate holding structure is made by joining the flanged part and the substrate holding table to each other after forming them individually; and a joint surface between the

flanged part and the substrate holding table is positioned so as to be connected to the single line segment extending in the vertical direction.

Claim 4 (Original): The substrate holding structure according to claim 1, wherein an inner circumferential surface of the flanged part provides an inclined surface, which is inclined such that an inner diameter of the flanged part successively increases as approaching the lower surface of the substrate holding table.

Claim 5 (Canceled)

Claim 6 (Original): The substrate holding structure according to claim 1, wherein: the heating mechanism includes an inner heating-mechanism part and an outer heating-mechanism part formed outside the inner heating-mechanism part; and the inner heating-mechanism part and the outer heating-mechanism part are driven by first and second drive power supply system both extending in the support column, respectively.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The substrate holding structure according to claim 6, wherein: the substrate holding table includes first and second semicircular conductive patterns, which are arranged below the heating mechanism and are connected to the second power supply line constituting the second drive power supply system; and the first and second conductive patterns substantially cover a whole area of the substrate holding table except for gap areas defined between the first conductive pattern and the second conductive pattern.

Claim 8 (Original): The substrate holding structure according to claim 1, wherein the substrate holding table and the support column are made of ceramics.

Claim 9 (Original): A substrate processing apparatus comprising: a processing vessel connected to an exhaust system; a gas supply system that supplies a process gas into the processing vessel; and the substrate holding structure, as defined in claim 1, arranged in the processing vessel.

Claim 10 (Withdrawn): A substrate holding structure comprising a support column provided at a top end portion thereof with a flanged part, and a substrate holding table joined to the flanged part, wherein: the substrate holding table includes a heating mechanism; the support column includes, at a joint between the support column and the substrate holding table, a flanged part having an inner circumferential surface and an outer circumferential surface; the inner circumferential surface provides an inclined surface, which is inclined such that an inner diameter of the flanged part successively increases as approaching the lower surface of the substrate holding table; the outer circumferential surface provides an inclined surface, which is inclined such that an outer diameter of the flanged part successively increases as approaching the lower surface of the substrate holding table; and the inclined surface constituting the outer circumferential surface undergoes continuous transition to the lower surface of the substrate holding table.

Claim 11 (Withdrawn): The substrate holding structure according to claim 11, wherein the lower surface of the substrate holding table is formed in a flat surface at a part joined to the flanged part and an area surrounding the part.

Claim 12 (New): A substrate holding structure comprising a support column provided at a top end portion thereof with a flanged part having an annular upper surface, and a substrate holding table joined to the flanged part, wherein:

the substrate holding table includes a heating mechanism;

the substrate holding table is provided in a lower surface thereof with a U-shaped groove extending along an outer circumferential surface of the flanged part; and

an inner circumferential surface of the U-shaped groove is connected to the outer circumferential surface of the flanged part to form a continuous single plane therewith;

wherein a second groove is formed in the lower surface of the substrate holding table in direct opposition to the annular upper surface of the flanged part,

whereby the flanged part is joined to the lower surface of the substrate holding table at an outermost annular area of its annular upper surface, and

whereby a remaining area of its annular upper surface is separated from the substrate holding part by a space provided by the second groove.

Claim 13 (New): A substrate processing apparatus comprising: a processing vessel connected to an exhaust system; a gas supply system that supplies a process gas into the processing vessel; and the substrate holding structure, as defined in claim 12, arranged in the processing vessel.